

FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF

PROGRAM The Today Show STATION WRC TV
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SUBJECT An Interview with Frank Snepp

JANE PAULEY: The Vietnam war ended more than two years ago, and, as you no doubt watched on television, the end of was chaos. Tom's guest this morning, however, says we weren't told how badly it was bungled until now.

Here's Tom.

TOM BROKAW: You'll recall that on April 29th and 30th, 1975, the final evacuation of the American Embassy in Saigon was carried out by a fleet of helicopters. It was a bizarre scene in what was many ways a bizarre war. Thousands got out; thousands more did not.

In the hysterical crowds who stormed the Embassy Compound in those final hours were many who had contributed information to the Central Intelligence Agency. Now, two and a half years later, this man has accused the American government of abandoning most of the ninety thousand Vietnamese who had worked with the CIA. He's written a book about it. It is called Decent Interval. The CIA does not like the book, nor do many of the former members of the Ford administration. The man's name is Frank Snepp. His credentials are that he was the CIA's strategy analyst in Saigon at the time.

Mr. Snepp, first of all, you say that the top officials in Washington and at the Embassy, Graham Martin, the Ambassador there, ignored the information that you had been providing, and others of your colleagues in the CIA, about the closing days in Saigon, what was likely to happen.

Isn't it possible that they weren't ignoring it, that they were just trying to cope with what was a rapidly changing situation?